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ACTIVITIES OF THE ROSTOVSKAYA OBLAST  
COMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION

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Communications enterprises of the USSR have to reorganize their work so as to meet the growing needs of the population, institutions, and enterprises of the country. The editorial office of Vestnik Svyazi organized a conference of leading workers in the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration and its enterprises to show the ways in which new problems are being solved in one oblast. In their speeches, the participants described measures which had already been carried out, and they also described fundamental deficiencies in their work.

A brief account of the conference follows:

A. S. Zatonskiy, chief of the Postal Communications Division -- In 1953, nine new interr rayon routes totaling 697 kilometers were served by departmental motor transport to reduce transmittal time for correspondence and printed matter in Rostovskaya Oblast.

New airmail lines were opened, making it possible to ensure prompt mail delivery to a series of northern rayons of the oblast. Now, mail is transported by airplanes in 36 rayons. Combined use of air, motor, and rail transport permits 56 rayons to receive the oblast newspaper on the day it is published. In the other 15 rayons, the newspaper arrives at night and is delivered the morning of the following day.

When roads are impassable, mail is dropped from airplanes to rayons along the Don and other rivers.

The Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration constantly checks the movement of mail on all interr rayon highways. Daily reports are received from all rayons. When the transmittal schedules are not adhered to, measures are immediately taken to ensure that the mail is delivered on time.

Special attention is given to the further development of the postal system. Ten communications enterprises were opened during 1953 in rural areas, and 726 mail boxes were added, 500 of them in rural areas.

We will not make demands on the Ministry of Communications without first exhausting all our own resources. However, now, when the problem of improving mail and newspaper delivery is becoming very acute, we must fill the complement of postmen in the newly opened communications sections at the expense of the existing staff and of other communications offices. In the future, the ministry will have to take this problem into account when making up the plan for the development of the postal network.

G. M. Tarnopol'skiy, chief of the Intrarayon Communications Division -- In 1953, the plan for installing telephones in rural soviets was fulfilled 106.3 percent and in MTS, 133 percent. Six small automatic telephone stations were put in operation. Much work was carried out on the reconstruction of intrarayon telephone communications. Urgent demands are being made on the oblast communications administration by MTS, rayon committees of the party, and communications enterprises for additional telephone service. According to preliminary data, almost 600 telephones must be installed in MTS. At the same time, a large number of supplementary circuits have to be installed.

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However, despite our inquiries, the Ministry of Communications had never explained what funds and materials can be used to carry out these measures.

Fifty telephone substations should also be built in MTS located in areas which do not have substations. Organization of these stations requires a large staff; part of the manpower will have to be taken from the present staff and the remainder compensated for by making intrarayon telephone communications automatic. We are now working out plans for installing telephones in kolkhozes in such a way as to meet the needs of MTS, too.

N. A. Larionenko, deputy chief of the Telephone and Telegraph Division -- New call stations have been opened to speed up transmittal time and to bring the services of interurban communications more directly to the population. The sale of coupons for long-distance telephone calls has been organized in all offices of the oblast that are equipped with telephones. The services of long-distance telephone communications are publicized both in the press and in posters and leaflets.

New channels have been opened, especially where there was more than an hour's wait for a call and where there was a large number of uncompleted calls. Old, worn-out equipment was replaced. Work is being done on introducing semi-automatic communications [systems].

This work also increases channel capacity and efficiency. We organized interrayeron seminars at five places for training telephone operators at rayon interurban stations.

However, we have not been able to eliminate completely the complaints about the work of the interrayeron telephone stations.

The Ministry of Communications must help us in the further development of long-distance communications. The Rostov interurban telephone stations need equipment for 12 operators' positions to organize separate order service (vydellenaya zakaznaya sluzhba). This will permit four line switchboards to be released for the newly opened communications channels. We need equipment for semiautomatic communications [systems], equipment for hooking up new channels and materials and funds for constructing additional circuits. The ministry should also schedule transit calls for us through central interurban telephone stations to cities of the Soviet Union.

A. V. Ostroumov, chief of Telegraph -- Lengthening operating hours in city communications offices to 16 hours a day has considerably improved service to Rostov citizens. Now, we deliver telegrams promptly to all addressees.

Before holidays, we send special cashiers to large industries and enterprises. They accept telegrams from those who cannot come to the telegraph office or to the communications offices. During the May and November holidays alone, 8,460 telegrams totaling 45,260 rubles were accepted by this method.

We have been distributing advertising material and visiting large enterprises to popularize the phototelegram. We send leaflets describing how telegrams can be accepted over the telephone to every individual who has a telephone. A subscribers' telegraph service which is hooked up to many switchboards in the city has significantly improved the service to institutions and enterprises. Now, we are expanding the subscribers' service to the Rostov port, the airport in Taganrog, and other points.

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During 1953, we increased the capacity of telegraph channels to lower telegram transmittal time and to increase the labor productivity of telegraph operators. Now, we have 35 automatic telegraph channels; during 1954, it is planned to make telegraph service completely automatic.

V. N. Zakhar'yants, chief of the Main Post Office -- During 1953, three additional communications offices were opened in the outlying districts of Rostov. The number of delivery districts in the city increased from 204 to 228. There were 200 mail boxes in 1952 and 230 in 1953.

The delivery of newspapers to subscribers has been speeded up. The central newspapers which come to Rostov by train were previously sent in the second delivery but are now in the first delivery at 0700 hours. Pravda and Izvestiya printed locally from matrixes are delivered in the second delivery, while they used to be taken in the third delivery.

For the convenience of the population, parcels now are distributed in two more city communications branch offices. Parcel delivery by automobile has also been organized for both enterprises and individuals. The acceptance of parcels at large establishments has been introduced.

During 1952, both current and capital repairs were made at all communications offices in the city. The appearance of communications offices has been improved, but they still do not have enough furniture.

We are having difficulty getting accommodations for offices in Rostov. It is also necessary to solve the problem of installing telephone equipment in city offices which have neither telegraph nor telephone facilities. Communications enterprises should be provided with office supplies regularly.

G. P. Yakovlev, chief of the Rostov interurban telephone station -- With the establishment of a working day from 900 hours to 1800 hours in Rostov, we have organized accordingly the operating schedule of the interurban telephone station.

Our interurban station could accommodate more than 90 percent of the sovkhozes, kolkhozes, and MIS of the oblast if these organizations were hooked up to a general (soyuznyy) network. But this work is still in the early formative stages. It has not yet been determined how to organize the servicing of rural subscribers, how to carry out accounts with them, and how to notify them about these services. These problems must be solved with the help of the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration.

We inquired at all rayons of secretaries of rayon party committees, and of chairmen of the rayon executive committee of the oblast, and found out that in 47 rayons there were no complaints about our station. But residents in the other rayons made the following complaints: the schedule does not provide and adequate number of hours for long-distance calls, inconveniences arise because of changes in the schedule, the line is frequently disconnected, etc.

We can eliminate many of the deficiencies ourselves, but the oblast administration also has to help us to maintain uninterrupted service on long-distance communications.

T. F. Lobanov, chief engineer of the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration -- We have paid special attention to capital construction, the repair of communications equipment, and the improvement of qualitative indexes.

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The plan for 1953 was not only fulfilled but was exceeded for every construction project, despite difficulties in securing materials. The capital-repair plan was fulfilled for the oblast as a whole and for each type of repair individually. The improvement in qualitative indexes was attained by good repair work and better-qualified workers in all branches of communications.

Considerable work was done in replacing obsolete equipment and organizing new interurban connections. We have begun to use the immediate system of operation on eight routes. Eight rayons of the oblast were transferred to semi-automatic operation.

Considerable work was also done on the city telephone system, intrarayon communications, and radiofication. We used all of our own resources and also enlisted the help of other organizations to carry out this work.

However, many improvements can still be made. On some circuits, the number of channels was not increased as it should have been. Although we have also opened a series of call offices, there are not enough of them in the oblast. Not all communications enterprises have been equipped with telephone booths. Long-distance calls to rayons of the oblast cannot be made from all city offices. We have to work out the solution of these problems ourselves, but the Ministry of Communications has to help us, particularly by allocating the necessary funds.

What complaints do we have against the ministry? This is the way the ministry works: It makes a plan according to which so many new offices are opened; the offices are checked off the list, and that is all. The ministry is little interested in the extent to which the needs of the population are satisfied. Opening an office and putting desks in it is not sufficient. Where is the city telephone system and the interurban telephone system? There are no such facilities in many offices. The result is that we have communications officer without communications.

The business of expanding city telephone communications is still unsatisfactory. While it is possible to use the local budget for installing telephones in a village, this is not possible in a city. Without the aid of the ministry we cannot satisfy the demand of the Rostov population for telephones.

More and more requests come in for installing telephones in the villages. But we do not have the telephones. Although the equipment is available in stores, the communications administration cannot acquire it, because there are no funds for anything above the amount allotted for capital expenditures. This is becoming embarrassing. We have been forced to answer the rural clientele, "If you purchase the telephone, we will install it." With the wide-scale installation of telephones in villages, the capacity of the telephone stations has to be increased. We are installing automatic telephone stations for 20 numbers; all of these numbers are quickly taken up, and there is no chance for further development. The automatic telephone stations for 40 numbers that have been designed are still not manufactured.

P. T. Kuznetsov, deputy chief of the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration -- In Rostovskaya Oblast, mail transportation has its special aspects, since 60 percent of the rayons are from 130 to 160 kilometers away from the railroad. Therefore, we have paid special attention to the mechanization of mail routes.

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We have improved delivery service in rural areas, with the help of the oblast and rayon party organization, so that all the kolkhozes now have permanent kolkhoz postmen.

During 1953, we began receiving and distributing parcels in 143 more enterprises. Paying and issuing money orders was also made more accessible to the workers, so that now all communications enterprises in our oblast carry out these operations. We printed approximately 1,000 advertisements to inform all those who use communications services how to make out postal blanks, etc. These advertisements, which were supplied to all city and rayon offices of the oblast, help to explain the nature of services offered, how to fill out forms, give postal rates, etc.

In 1954, we are giving immediate attention to the mechanization of mail transportation on interrayon routes. The Ministry of Communications helped us by allotting a large number of automobiles (GAZ-69 and GAZ-63) for use on interrayon routes. We worked out a system for transporting mail which will make the delivery of the oblast newspaper Molot, possible in all rayons on the day it is published. Mail will be delivered by air to some distant rayons and even to nearby rayons.

We are also planning this year to have departmental transport service on all intrarayon routes going to MFS and sovkhozes and also to kolkhozes which have horse relay stations for mail.

A. I. Merkulov, chief of the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration -- Participants in the conference have spoken of the work which has been done in the light of the tasks set before communications workers in the latest resolutions of the party and the government. But much more work should and could be done. We still have not used all resources available to us.

Bringing communications services to the population and improving their quality is our most important task. Therefore, we cannot restrict ourselves to opening new communications enterprises, additional call offices, etc. Let us take, for example, the workday schedule. Some of our communications enterprises are scheduled to cease operations at the same time as other establishments in the city. We should introduce a staggered schedule to lengthen the working day for an hour or two.

In the field of postal communications, we should pay more attention to lower class offices from the communications branch office on down. Here much is yet to be done to improve the quality of work. In particular we should think about creating traveling communications branch offices. We can organize them and we have enough motor vehicles.

Although the plan for radiofication was exceeded in our oblast, still not everything was done here to improve the service to the population. Some rayons do not have radio repair shops.

We still are not doing any analytical work. For example, our interurban telephone station should study the structure of traffic, discover the telephone routes that are most likely to break down, and then transfer the service of those rayons directly to the oblast center.

Our central telegraph office should pay more attention to rayon telegraph offices and give them daily technical assistance. This is especially important, because it is chiefly the rayon communications that cause the delay and errors in telegraph communications.

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The chiefs of the following divisions in the Rostovskaya Oblast Communications Administration also spoke at the conference: B. M. Solomennikov, chief of the Telephone Division; R. N. Zakhar'yants, chief of the Personnel Division; V. Kh. Gregor'yev, chief of the Directorate of the Radio Relay Network (DRTS); V. P. Pisarev, chief of the Department for the Distribution and Expediting of the Press (OREP); A. S. Khitov, chief of the Novocherkasskiy Rayon Communications Office, and others.

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